Lovely Strange Dark
ULTRABAROQUE DEPROGRAMMER
BY ITOU SEIKOU & ASADA TORAO
CHAPTER 30
Scans & translations
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lovelystrangedark.wordpress.com

click
click
click
LOOKS LIKE OUR SITUATIONS HAVE BEEN REVERSED.

NO MATTER WHERE YOU SET OUR DESTINATION, IT WON'T MATTER.
DO YOU THINK YOU CAN TAKE ON ALL OF PW ALONE?
I'M NOT ALONE.
TAKAZAWA HIDETO ISN'T THE TYPE OF MAN TO DIE THAT EASILY
YOU MEAN TAKAZAWA THE SECOND?
THE FIRST DIED A LONG TIME AGO
IT'S PRETTY BACKWARD TO PASS ON NAMES IN A SCIENTIFIC FIELD, YOU KNOW.
I ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THE SECOND WAS A WORLD-CLASS DEPROGRAMMER,
BUT IF YOU'RE EXPECTING HIM TO HELP OUT IN HIS FORMER CAPACITY, YOU'RE WAY OFF THE MARK
WHAT WE DID TO HIM ISN'T SOMETHING HE COULD UNDO HIMSELF.

RIGHT NOW, HE'S JUST ANOTHER SUBPAR DEPROGRAMMER
BUT YOU HAVEN'T EVEN MET STANLEY'S SISTER!
AND L.A.'S SO FAR FROM TOKYO.
CAN YOU ACTUALLY DO IT!?
HE WANTS TO HYPNOTIZE HER REMOTELY, I THINK.
YOU'RE GOING TO DEPROGRAM HER FROM HERE?
WHY DO YOU WANT TO MAKE A VIDEO CALL?
WAIT, YOU DON'T MEAN...!?

IT'LL BE FINE, SORACHAI!
NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT
I'VE DONE IT BEFORE.
I'm such a liar!
Not!

# CHAPTER 30 OFF THE TRACK TO HARDCORE 4

WHAT'RE YOU THINKING!?
I JUST GOT EVERYONE TO CALM DOWN
AND CONVINCED THEM YOU AREN'T DANGEROUS
DON'T YOU GET WHAT WE'RE TRYING TO DO HERE?
YOU CAN'T GO OFF AND TRY TO DEPROGRAM SOMEONE! NO WAY!
WE HAVE TO WORK WITH UGLY TO GET INTO THAT DEFUNCT HOSPITAL ALL THE SQUATTERS ARE AFTER NOBIRU AND CHIKA ARE PROBABLY THERE ——
THESE GUYS AREN'T GOING TO WORK WITH ME IF THEY DON'T BELIEVE ME!
BUT IF YOU FAIL TO DEPROGRAM HER, THEN IT'S OVER!
NOT ONLY WILL WE GET KICKED OUT, BUT YOU'LL PUT STANLEY THROUGH HELL TOO!
I THINK OF BRAINWASHING AND DEPROGRAMMING
AS THINGS FAKE PSYCHICS DO
AND DID YOU FORGET THAT YUUZOU JUST HAD TO SAVE YOU?

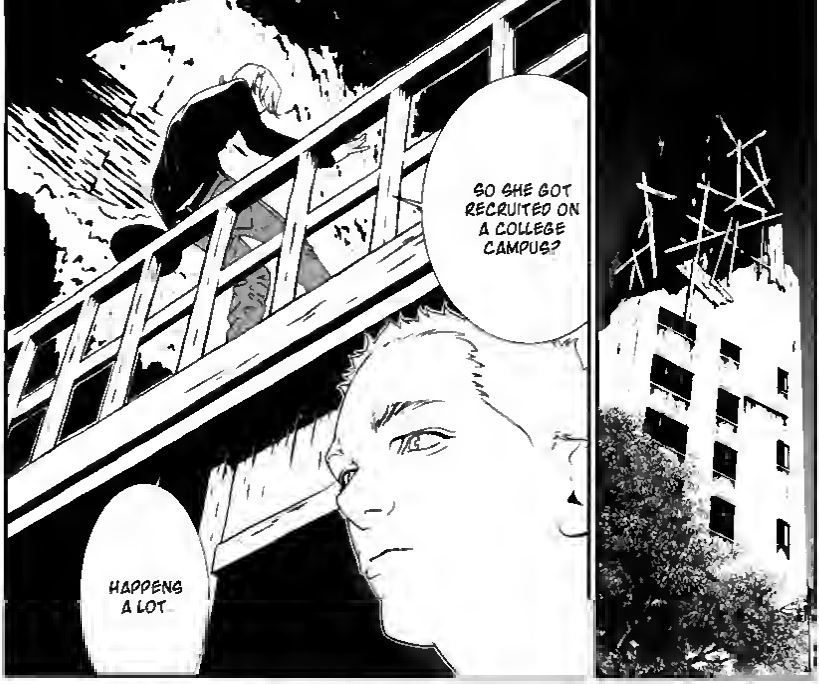
AND IF SOMETHING WERE TO HAPPEN, WE CAN'T ASK HIM FOR HELP HE'S OUT JOB HUNTING
I NEVER WENT THAT FAR...
REMEMBER? HE'S THE GUY YOU CALLED A WASTE-OF-SPACE THIRD-RATE WASHER
HEY!
I'VE GOT THIS SURE FEELING THAT MY SKILL'S IMPROVED
HEAR ME OUT
EVER SINCE I DOVE INTO MYSELF
WHAT WE'RE TALKING ABOUT HERE IS GETTING SOMEONE OUT OF A CULT
OR WELL, SHE'S ALREADY LEFT, SO IT'S SEVERING THE SPELL OF THAT DOCTRINE AND LIFESTYLE
THAT'S GOT AHOLD OF HER

SO THE DIVES YOU'VE DONE SINCE WE MET WERE UNUSUAL?
I KNOW IT'S AN EXCUSE,
BUT THIS NEXT ONE IS MORE ABOUT STAMINA THAN SKILL LEVEL, I'D SAY.
Not like diving blind into myself
or into Nobiru with his super-powers.
I FIGURE I'VE PROBABLY DONE IT A FAIR NUMBER OF TIMES MYSELF.
IT'S A STANDARD JOB FOR DEPROGRAM-MERS.
And I don't even know if it's possible
To do a dive through a video call——
Chapter 10
How do I go about doing it again?
The technique where you partition yourself into three,
Before I was doing it unconsciously, as naturally as breathing
The problem here is that Calavera is missing.
CALL YUUZOU
HOLD IT! I TOLD YOU, THAT'S NOT AN OPTION!
IF MY CONDITION TAKES A BAD TURN, SING THAT THAI SONG LIKE BEFORE.
THAT LULLABY AGAIN?
YEAH. AND IF THAT DOESN'T WORK——

ARE YOU GUYS ALL BUYING WHAT THAT DEPRO-GRAMMER'S SELLING?
HE JUST SOUNDS LIKE A CON-MAN TURNS MY STOMACH
...YOU KNOW,
I'LL GO GRAB A POWER CORD AND ADAPTER
STACK IT HERE, ANY-WHERE YOU CAN FIND SPACE

SORRY ABOUT THAT, GWEN
LOOK, WE BORROWED GWEN'S ROOM HERE BECAUSE IT'S GOT THE MOST STABLE POWER AND INTERNET, AND IT'S QUIET
THIS ISN'T—
THAT GUY, HAS HE PLANNED FOR EVERY POSSIBLE OUTCOME?
WHAT HAPPENS IF THEIR CALL GETS DROPPED MID-WAY THROUGH, OR SHE STARTS TAKING A BAD TURN?
IN THE UNLIKELY EVENT THAT HE CAN HYPNOTIZE HER LONG-DISTANCE,

THE GO-CALLED ELITES IN THE PSYCHO BUSINESS, ALL OF THEM,
SPEAK WITH CALM, GENTLE VOICES THAT SLIP INSIDE YOUR HEAD
BUT WHEN THIS GUY TALKS, HE DOESN'T SOUND LIKE A CON-MAN TO ME
BUT WASN'T THIS YOUR IDEA, STANLEY?
NO WORRIES
I DIDN'T THINK HE COULD PULL IT OFF
FIGURED HE'D THROW OUT SOME EXCUSE AND TAKE OFF
IT'S ALL JUST TALK.
IT'S ALWAYS ALL JUST BEEN TALK.


SO SHE GOT RECRUITED ON A COLLEGE CAMPUS?
HAPPENS A LOT

BUT THE QUESTION IS HOW BADLY STANLEY'S KID SISTER WAS BRAIN-WASHED
OR WELL-WASHED AS YOU GUYS SAY IN THE BIZ
I DON'T THINK STANLEY KNOWS HOW BADLY EITHER
SHE WAS STUDYING ABROAD IN L.A., SO IT WAS A WHILE BEFORE HER FAMILY IN TOKYO NOTICED WHAT WAS GOING ON
OF COURSE, THE ONES CANVASSING THE AREA DON'T CALL THEMSELVES PW
THE BRAIN-WASHING GETS WORSE THE LONGER YOU'RE IN THERE
IT GETS HARD TO LEAVE
SO I'VE HEARD

THE WEST COAST IS CONSIDERED A NEW AGE MECCA
along with former cult members and experts.
Stanley said his folks have been traveling back and forth between here and L.A.,
Their parents have been struggling with it for years.
When they thought they had her out, she ran back to PW on her own.
I HATE TO BAD-MOUTH PEOPLE IN THE SAME LINE OF BUSINESS,
BUT THAT PLACE IS OVERFLOWING WITH SKETCHY SELF-STYLED EXPERTS AND THERAPISTS
IN THAT CASE,
YOU GOT ANY PROOF YOU'RE DIFFERENT?
WELL, TAKE A SEAT I'LL MAKE SOME TEA

YOU KNOW YOU'RE THE OUTSIDER HERE, RIGHT?
I
TO BE HONEST, I DON'T HAVE MUCH LOVE FOR MY SISTER
WHEN I THINK ABOUT EVERYTHING SHE'S PUT OUR PARENTS THROUGH, SHE DESERVES MORE THAN A GOOD WHALLOP
Click
MY FOLKS WOUND UP SICK WITH ALL THE WORRY,
Tap
SO I WENT THERE ONCE IN THEIR PLACE
AND THREW HER IN THE LOCAL HOSPITAL
—SHOW ME

YOU'VE GOT A PICTURE
OF YOUR SISTER, RIGHT?
HEY, YOU GUYS LOOK NOTHING ALIKE.
THERE'S NOT A TRACE OF THAT SMILE ANYMORE.
...THERE'S SOMETHING THAT'S BEEN BUGGING ME FROM THE START.
HER NAME IS MIF.

BUT
I THOUGHT YOUR SISTER CAN HARDLY SPEAK ICELANDIC?
HUH!? THAT TRUE!?
WAIT... DOESN'T THIS PLACE LOOK FANCIER THAN BEFORE...?
IS THERE ANYTHING ON ICELAND...?
UM...
FLAMM
SILENCE...
WHAT LANGUAGE ARE YOU PLANNING TO HYPNOTIZE HER IN?
CAN'T YOU SPEAK LIKE TEN LANGUAGES?
THEN AGIRI'S ALL TENS, RIGHT?
STANLEY..
SHE'S A SIX IN ENGLISH, TWO IN JAPANESE, AND ONE IN ICELANDIC. I WENT TO SCHOOL HERE, BUT SHE STUDIED ABROAD.
I'M A TEN IN THAI, EIGHT IN JAPANESE, AND NINE IN ENGLISH. I COULD HAVE A CHAT PRETTY MUCH ANYWHERE IN ASIA.
I'D SAY YOU'RE A FIVE IN JAPANESE, FOUR IN ICELANDIC, AND ONE IN ENGLISH.
...NO? ZERO DATA? REALLY?
YOU'RE STANLEY, RIGHT? WHERE YOU FROM?
ICELAND.
THE LANGUAGE IN ICELAND ...
ZOOM

HUH?
RUMM
AH HH HH!
YOUR SISTER WAS RECRUITED FROM A COLLEGE IN L.A., RIGHT?
YEAH.
WOULDN'T THAT MEAN SHE WAS BRAINWASHED IN ENGLISH?
RUMM...

IT'S CRUMBLING...? OR WAIT, IT LOOKS LIKE THE CONNECTIONS ARE BEING REPLACED...

"English Grammar"
TAKAZAWA THE SECOND
CAN WORK IN MULTIPLE LANGUAGES?
EVEN FOR A WASHER LIKE YOU, WHO'S FLUENT IN MULTIPLE LANGUAGES, IT'S DIFFICULT FOR YOU TO WASH A FOREIGNER USING ANYTHING BUT YOUR NATIVE LANGUAGE
TRUE, I DON'T KNOW ANYONE ASIDE FROM MYSELF WHO CAN
I CAN DO A DECENT JOB IN JAPANESE, BUT NOT IN ENGLISH.
...LOOKS LIKE THERE WON'T BE A PROBLEM.
HUH?
IT'S ALL GOOD, STANLEY

SO, HOW LONG BEFORE THE COMPUTER'S UP AND RUNNING?
NO WAY——
IT'S ENGLISH. HE'S SPEAKING IN ENGLISH.
WHAT'S HE SAYING?
HE JUST STARTED BABBLING.
BUT EVEN IN YOUR NATIVE LANGUAGE OF DUTCH,
HE COULD WASH AND DEPROGRAM BETTER THAN YOU.
NOT EVEN I KNOW WHAT COUNTRY TAKAZAWA THE SECOND IS FROM.

I WAS STREAMING FILTER PROGRAMS AND TRAPS THROUGH HIS EARS DAILY.
NO... HE WAS BASICALLY A CRIPPLE.
Is it possible that he managed to wash me...?
So it couldn't be—

blink
slide...

AGIRI, CHECK THE CONNECTION, WILL YOU?
Wait for me.

No matter what mind maze you're trapped in,
I'll open the door for you.